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Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION OCS-06

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9026

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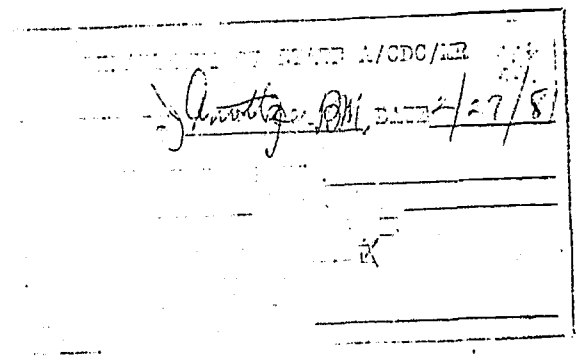
E.O. 12065: NA
TAGS: CARR (LAYTON, LARRY)
SUBJ: W/W ARRESTS: LARRY LAYTON; JURY TRIAL BEGINS

1. HIGH COURT TRIAL OF AMCIT LARRY LAYTON BEGAN TODAY (FEB 19) BEFORE CHIEF JUSTICE HAROLD BOLLERS IN THE CASE OF THE MURDERS OF CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN AND FOUR OTHER AMERICANS KILLED AT PORT KAITUMA LAST NOV. 18. LAYTON WAS READ TWO INDICTMENTS. THE FIRST ACCUSED HIM OF FIVE COUNTS OF MURDER; THE SECOND ACCUSED HIM OF THREE COUNTS OF ATTEMPTED MURDER, AND ONE COUNT EACH OF UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM, UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF AMMUNITION, AND WOUNDING BY THE DISCHARGE OF A FIREARM. LAYTON PLEADED NOT GUILTY TO ALL ELEVEN CHARGES.

2. BEFORE JURORS, COULD BE SELECTED, SENIOR DEFENSE COUNSEL REX MCKAY APPLIED FOR ADJOURNMENT FOR NINE DAYS TO ALLOW A "PSYCHIATRIST OR PSYCHOLOGIST" FROM THE U.S. TO ATTEND THE TRIAL. MCKAY ASSERTED THAT BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT CARNIVAL CELEBRATIONS IN TRINIDAD, IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE FOR AIR TRAVEL NEW YORK/GEORGETOWN. PROSECUTING COUNSEL NANDRAM KISSIOON STATED THAT THE STATE WAS READY TO BEGIN ITS CASE, BUT LEFT IT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE AS TO HOW TO RULE ON THE APPLICATION BY THE DEFENSE. CHIEF JUSTICE BOLLERS, NOTING THAT THE PROSECUTION COULD NOT DEFINITELY STATE THAT IT HAD ENOUGH WITNESSES AT THE PRESENT TIME TO CALL FOR NINE DAYS, SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT ANY INTERRUPTIONS IN THE TRIAL ONCE IT STARTED. HE THEN FIXED FEB. 28 FOR RESUMPTION OF THE TRIAL.

3. COMMENT: COURTROOM SPECULATION BEFORE THE TRIAL WAS RIFE CONCERNING RUMORS OF PLEA BARGAINING, WHEREIN LAYTON WOULD PLEAD GUILTY TO A CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER, AND IN RETURN THE STATE WOULD DROP THE OTHER CHARGES. LOCAL JOURNALISTS SPECULATE THAT A BARGAIN WAS NOT REACHED BECAUSE THE CHIEF JUSTICE REFUSES TO COMMIT HIMSELF TO THE DEFENSE OVER HOW LONG A SENTENCE HE WOULD IMPOSE ON LAYTON IF THE ACCUSED PLEAD GUILTY. END COMMENT.

BURKE



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